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GATEWAY TO EXCELLENCE

December 1998

ST. LOUIS ARMY ENGINEER DIST **ESPRI**

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District's EPM program wins Honor Award

The St. Louis District has won an honor award in the 1998 Chief of Engineers Design and Environmental Awards Program. The award is for our Environmental Pool Management program.

One of the basic USACE missions is to assure reliable waterway navigation. The locks and dams on the Mississippi River achieve this goal, but at a cost to the ecosystem. Satellite technology has made precise real-time water flow measurement possible, and improved weather forecasting allows accurate prediction of precipitation.



Before



After

These developments enable the St. Louis District to institute its Environmental Pool Management program. EPM varies water levels in pools at the locks and dams, mimicking seasonal changes. This is done at no cost to the taxpayer and without compromising navigation.

Through a strong partnership with federal and state agencies and other groups, this cost-free solution improved aquatic wildlife and vegetation, as well as water quality.



Chief's holiday message

The people of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have much to be thankful for during the holiday season - our health, our nation, our families and friends.

The fact that we are part of a dynamic, forward-looking organization should also be high on our list of things for which to be thankful. Our initiatives in areas like Project Management, Readiness 2000, senior civilian selections, and Divisions as Business Centers, to name just a few, show we are rapidly evolving to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

There are others who have reason to be thankful for the Corps of Engineers. Many people were struck by natural disasters this year, and the Corps was among those who came to their aid. We provided water and ice during Hurricanes Bonnie and Georges and tropical storm Charley. During Hurricane Georges in Puerto Rico we added temporary roofing and emergency electric power to our water and ice missions. Our people were there to provide ice during the Florida fires, to assist during floods in Korea and the Midwest, to clean up tornado damage at Fort Stewart, Georgia, and to serve on the front lines of dealing with El Nino storms. In the wake of Hurricane Mitch, Corps people moved rapidly and efficiently to support the massive relief effort.

Everyone likes to be home for the holidays, but there are Corps people who won't be able to make it. They are supporting soldiers in Bosnia, helping lay the groundwork for destroying chemical and nuclear weapons in Russia, and working in many other places where the Corps supports the Army and other nations.

Whether we are repairing schools in Washington, D.C., taking part in scientific expeditions in the Arctic, helping bring a new recreation reservation service on-line, or improving the quality of life for service members and their families by building new facilities at installations in the U.S. and around the world, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers remains the top engineer agency of choice for the nation.

I am proud of the way Corps people faced challenges this year while adjusting to sweeping internal changes. I look forward, with excitement and anticipation, to what we will face together in 1999 and in the coming century.

The Corps family wishes you a safe and joyous holiday season, and a happy, healthy, successful New Year.

JOE N. BALLARD
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
St. Louis District

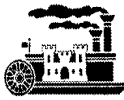
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News Briefs

Mark Twain Lake:

Shooting range coming to lake

A shooting range is on the horizon for the Mark Twain Lake Area. Partners in this endeavor recently formalized a Challenge Cost Sharing Agreement that will provide safe location and facilities for recreational shooting. James Carter, Chief of

through local Friends of NRA events.

The three partners pooled resources and expertise to solve a mutual need for safe shooting facilities in the Mark Twain Lake Area. The range was designed in cooperation with members of the Mark Twain Lake Project Office and the Missouri Department of Conservation Protection Division along with guidance from the National Rifle Association.



Seated from left to right: Jim Carter, Jerry Conley and Gregg Pearre. Standing: Ron Glover, MDC Protection Office and Dave Berti, assistant project manager.

Construction-Operation Readiness Division, St. Louis District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jerry Conley, Director, Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) and Gregg Pearre, Field Representative for the National Rifle Association met in Jefferson City to sign the agreement. Mr. Pearre also presented Mr. Carter with a \$20,000 check made possible from a grant from the NRA Foundation to help with facility construction. The donation comes from money raised

through local Friends of NRA events. The range will provide a public shooting range for the benefit of educational and efficiency training during hunter education courses, youth shooting programs, area law enforcement, individuals with disabilities, recreational shooters and promotion of the shooting sports. The universally accessible shooting range is proposed for the Warren G. See South Spillway Recreation Area.

The shadow knows

Briane Ince, a student at the Bowling Green High School, spent a day shadowing Park Rangers at Mark Twain Lake. The shadowing program at the Bowling Green High School gives students the opportunity to spend a "day in the life" of a peer in a potential career field. Briane got the opportunity to visit with and assist Rangers in the Interpretive Services, Visitor Assistance, Recreation and Resource Management programs.

Mark Twain Lake employees will be offering similar opportunities to other local school systems in order to expand SCEP and STEP recruitment and to promote career opportunities with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Disabled deer hunt

With the combined efforts of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Monroe City and Paris Lions Clubs, numerous volunteers and local businesses, the 11th Annual physically challenged hunt for deer was a huge



Billy Walker, from Curryville, Mo., got his deer.

(Continued on page 4)



News Briefs (cont.)

success. Twenty-six physically challenged hunters had the opportunity to experience an outdoor recreation activity that is typically not accessible to them. Fourteen hunters were able to harvest 24 deer.

Base camp was set up around a double fireplace in the Indian Creek Group Campground Shelter House. Volunteers transported hunters to specially made blinds that could accommodate wheel chairs and assisted with the retrieval of deer harvested by the hunters. Thanks to many volunteers this unique opportunity is again, a popular event for physically challenged hunters.

Rend Lake:

Goose hunt

Rend Lake offers a unique hunting opportunity for persons with disabilities to return to the field to hunt geese. An in-ground goose pit is available, by reservation, for hunters with disabilities. Sportsmen who wish to hunt geese from the pit must possess a P2 or P2A disability card issued by the Illinois Secretary of State. The goose pit features a gradually sloping sidewalk for easy access and a "roll top" for maximum camouflage. Construction of the goose pit was made possible by funding provided from a challenge-cost share agreement with the Big Muddy Chapter of Waterfowl USA.

The 67-day goose season at Rend Lake runs from November 26, 1998 through January 31, 1999, or until a quota of 2,300 geese are harvested in the Rend Lake Quota Zone. Hunters must be accompanied by at least one person to assist them with their hunt. Assistants who are properly licensed by the State

may also hunt. In no case shall more than five persons occupy the pit and surrounding hunting area. Hunters and assistants must be in full compliance with all State and Federal laws and regulations.

Prospective hunters must complete an application form, which is available from the Rend Lake Project Office. Applications will be accepted beginning October 19, 1998. Only one hunting date will be assigned per application and each applicant will be limited to three hunting dates per month. Hunting applications received by mail will be filled on a first serve basis, if multiple applications are received for the same date, an in-house lottery drawing will determine who will hunt that day. Applications must be received at least two days in advance of the requested hunting day.

Helping hand

Park Ranger Jerry Schutte spent an eye-opening month in Puerto Rico providing assistance to victims of hurricane George. As a part of the Corps of Engineers emergency response team, Jerry was responsible for inspecting homes for damages caused to the roof. Plastic "tarp" roofs were placed on homes with damaged or missing roof sections. With no electricity and less than sanitary living conditions in Puerto Rico, Jerry reported that he was happy to be back home. However, he enjoyed being able to lend a hand where he was needed.

Major sponsors

The Corps of Engineers at Rend Lake and Southern Illinois Special Events presented Mariah

Boats and Crownline Boats, Inc. each with a framed photo in appreciation of their unfailing support of the Rend Lake Cleanup. Crownline and Mariah have been major sponsors, donating \$500.00 or more each year, for many years.

The caption below the photo that was presented to Crownline and Mariah states; "RESPONSIBILITY, Treat the earth well: remember that it was not given to us by our parents.... but was lent to us by our children." The engraved plaque reads; "Presented to (Crownline Boats, Inc./Mariah Boats) in recognition for outstanding cooperation and support of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Rend Lake Cleanup."

The success of the Rend Lake Cleanup would be far less without the support of Crownline, Mariah, and the many other regional businesses, organizations, and individuals that donate time, prizes, and money to this community oriented event.

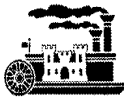
Bonus checks

The Illini Chapter of Whitetails Unlimited of Bloomington, Illinois succeeded in bringing a smile to the faces of two lucky hunters of the 19th Annual Rend Lake Deer Hunt for Persons with Disabilities. The



Assistant Operations Manager Andrea Lewis and Park Ranger Dawn Kovarik present a check to Deric Rice.

(Continued on next page)



News Briefs (cont.)

hunters were each recipients of \$250.00 bonus checks provided by the Whitetails Unlimited group.

Whitetails Unlimited had planned to sponsor one hunter to attend the Rend Lake deer hunt, however, a last minute surgery kept that hunter from taking to the field. Through the generosity of the Illini Chapter, the money that was earmarked for one hunter, then became a pleasant surprise for two hunters. The names of LaVon Zeigler of Glen Ellyn and Deric Rice of Salem, Illinois were drawn from a hat and they were presented the money by Park Ranger Dawn Kovarik, on behalf of Whitetails Unlimited, at the deer hunt banquet held the night prior to opening day of deer season. The only stipulation that came with the checks was that the money was to be spent to defray the costs that the two hunters incurred during the 6-day deer season. The two recipients were pleasantly surprised and very gracious at the generous gift that was given by the Illini Chapter of Whitetails Unlimited.

Wappapello Lake: Festival of lights

The Corps of Engineers and the Wappapello Lake Lions Club will be working in partnership again this holiday season to host the 6th Annual Festival of Lights Christmas Auto Tour. This event will be held 27 November through 13 December on weekends (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) and 18 December through 26 December nightly at the Redman Creek West Campground from dusk until 10 p.m. This free event is sure to provide twinkling eyes and a cheerful smile as you drive

through the illuminated campground to view the many decorated sites. Even jolly ol' Santa and others will make several special appearances to provide candy canes and holiday spirit as they did for about 14,500 people who attended last year.

Businesses, groups, organizations and individuals can participate at no charge in this holiday festivity by safely decorating a campsite with as many lights as possible to create a totally "bright" holiday. This event truly emits a warm glow to add to the season's festivities.

Safety summit

The 1999 International Boating and Water Safety Summit will be held 21-24 April 1999, in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Last year's event offered a world of information concerning boating and water safety issues. The Wappapello Lake team's application to be presenters at the summit with the Ranger Willie B. Safe Public Safety Education Program was approved. This presentation is tentatively scheduled for Friday, April 23 at 2 p.m.

Buckle up

Ranger Willie B. Safe and Safety Team wishes everyone a safe and enjoyable holiday season! Drinking and driving don't mix but buckled up seat belts and driving do!

Lake Shelbyville:

Sport shooting

By Pam Doty, Lake Shelbyville ranger

Fourteen adults and girls attended an introduction to shooting

sports for girls at Twin Oaks Sporting Clays near Mode, Illinois, on September 19. Partners for this event were the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Twin Oaks Sporting Clays, Wooter's Sporting Goods, Federal Cartridge Company, Corps of Engineers, Pheasants Forever and Women's Shooting Sports Foundation.

This event is the first of many involving the Girls Outdoor Learning and Discovery (GOLD) program being introduced through Eagle and Wolf Creek State Parks. GOLD may also include instruction on camping, archery, canoeing and fishing.

The WISH program, which will likely be repeated next year, instructed shooting at two levels: live ammo firing and simulated practice.



Under one-on-one instruction the girls had an opportunity to practice shooting clay pigeons using either a 12 or 20-gauge shotgun. The simulated program included the use of a computerized hunting simulator. The Hunter Interactive Training System (HITS), a state-of-the-art hunting simulation allowed girls to fire mock shotguns at footage of rabbits, deer and other game in their natural settings.

Safety was stressed throughout the day. The girls were shown how to properly handle firearms safely before they could participate in the activities. While involved in the activities, hunter safety instructors

(Continued on page 7)



District to use new fleet credit card

On December 1, we change from using the Wright Express U.S. Government Fleet Services Card to the new Voyager Fleet Credit Card. The Voyager Credit Card system is part of the CITIBANK MasterCard and Visa network. Voyager originally was part of the Texaco Oil Company. This new credit card gives the Logistics Management Division greater flexibility in monitoring the use of each card.

There should not be a drastic change from the use of the Wright Express card to the use of the new card. As before, each card will be tied to the use of a specific vehicle. The odometer reading must be given for each use of the Voyager card.

With Wright Express, the "Vehicle Card Number" as shown on the card was the "PIN" or "ID" number. Voyager requires the last five digits of the vehicle license plate number as the PIN or ID. The machines at the pumps will prompt for the PIN and when swiping the card inside or during a manual transaction, you will be prompted for an ID number. Please keep in mind that the PIN and ID numbers are the same - the last five digits of the license plate.

Should any problems arise with any usage of the card, there is an "800" telephone number on the reverse side of the card. When this number is called, the operator will work to solve the problem with the vendor.

The card will be accepted at any marina that dispenses fuel from one of the participating oil companies.

Voyager Credit Card is currently accepted by most of the major oil companies across the country. More companies are being added every day. LM-T has disseminated a current list of those companies accepting the Voyager credit card.

Each card should have a pamphlet from CITIBANK explaining how to use the card and providing special instructions for different situations. To avoid any problems, read this pamphlet carefully before proceeding in a vehicle.



From your Security Office

Internet usage

The Internet is becoming a primary resource for almost every Corps employee as a way to create, process, exchange and add value to information. The Internet allows us to gain access to sites all over the world and serves as a wonderful resource for locating information on just about any topic we can think of. However, did you know that each time you access the Internet, your connection is being tracked? Each time you login, you are identified as an employee of the Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District.

The computers we use are ultimately the property of the United States Government and there are rules concerning proper, authorized usage. As stated on the bright red warning screen that appears during login to the network, "any use of government communication resources serves as consent to monitoring." The following information was taken from policies issued by Mississippi Valley Division.

YOU HAVE PERMISSION TO USE YOUR COMPUTER TO ACCESS AND USE THE INTERNET:

- * for work related research
 - * for professional development purposes, subject to ensuring that your primary duties and mission are accomplished.
 - * for any other personal reasons, such as routine e-mail correspondence, reading a business magazine website, or checking stock quotes;
- BUT YOU MAY ONLY DO THIS**

BEFORE AND AFTER WORK HOURS, OR DURING YOUR LUNCH PERIOD.

Using your computer to access the Internet and store, process, download, view, send or otherwise transmit offensive or obscene language or material is **STRICTLY PROHIBITED!** Offensive material includes, but is not limited to, "hate literature", such as racist literature, materials, or symbols; and sexually harassing material. Obscene material includes, but is not limited to, pornography, nudity, and other sexually explicit materials.

It is possible to monitor and track websites that are visited by District employees using government computer systems. Disciplinary action has and will be taken against those who are in violation of the Internet usage policies. Please be responsible and use your best

(Continued on next page)



Internet (cont.)

judgment when accessing websites with government computers, even when doing so on personal time. If you have any questions or would like to obtain copies of the Internet usage policies, please call or stop by the Security Office.

Quote of the month

They must often change who would be constant in happiness or wisdom.

Confucius

News Briefs (cont.)

worked one-on-one with the girls to ensure that they practiced proper firearm safety. The girls had to pass the state hunter safety course before attending this event.

District headquarters

Hanukkah & the dreidel story

This year Hanukkah begins on December 14 and extends through December 21. The eight-day celebration marks an important victory for a band of freedom-loving Jews over the large and powerful Syrian army.

In the year 165 B.C. the Syrian king tried to force Jews in Palestine to give up their religion. Those who refused were murdered. Their temple was taken over by the rulers.

When the Maccabees re-entered their Holy Temple, they had only enough oil to burn the Temple's perpetual light for one night. Miraculously, the oil continued to burn for eight days and nights. The miracle explains why Hanukkah is called the Festival of Lights.

At many Hanukkah celebrations today, the dreidel is there. The four-sided top used in a children's game, played in the firelight of a winter's night while the Menorah glows.

Four letters on the sides of the top stand for, "A great miracle happened here."

The players use nuts, raisins, or chocolate coins as tokens. In one way to play, players spin the top. If

Nun comes up, nothing happens. For Gimel, the player takes all the tokens. If Hey turns up, the player gets half the pot. For Shin, the player must put one token into the pot.

Rabbi Yaakov Sinclair says

the four sides of the dreidel represent four periods of domination in Jewish history.

The dreidel story, says Sinclair, begins 1,437 years before the miracle of Hanukkah. It began with

Jacob's dream of angels ascending and descending

a ladder that reached from the ground to the heavens.

The first angel ascended the ladder 70 steps before descending. The Jewish people were in exile in Babylon for 70 years. The second angel climbed the ladder 52 steps. The Jews were in exile in Persia 52 years. The third angel climbed 180 rungs before descending. The domination of Greece lasted 180 years.

The last ascended the entire ladder and never descended, indicating the domination of Rome and its successors. This angel's message, says this Rabbi, is that the Jewish faith must be defended forever.



Boat has a name

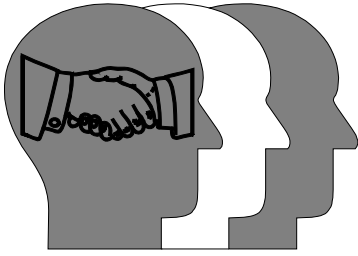
Thanks to all who participated in the contest to name the District's boat robot. There were almost 100 names submitted and deciding on a winner was not easy.

The winner of the great CAC prize package is Kim Hammel from Carlyle Lake. Her suggestion was Corkey. Someone else suggested this would be the "Corps key to boating and water safety education." Of course, when it comes to alcohol and boating, Corkey says, "Put a cork in it."

Thanks again to those who submitted names.

Electronic mail newsletters

The District Human Resources Office periodically publishes electronic mail newsletters about current events affecting federal employees and/or their benefits programs. Should you wish to be added to the e-mail distribution on these newsletters, please send an e-mail to Dick Boudreau asking you be added to the list and providing your e-mail address. Dick's e-mail address is : Richard.Boudreau@MVS02.usace.army.mil.



EEO matters

Discrimination in the workplace: a proactive approach

Editor's note: The following is excerpted and/or paraphrased from an article by Christine Louise Weiss in Career Magazine.

Prejudicial discrimination - the unethical, immoral and illegal practice of hiring and promoting based on derogatory value judgements about cultural ethnicity, sexual proclivity, age, gender, physical impairment, personal creed or professed religious faith - is an unhealthy facet of life. Stemming from deeply ingrained misperception, ignorance and covert fear, prejudicial discrimination and preferential treatment ravage academic wisdom and moral sensibility with selective bias. The result is a polarized society where subterfuge between "the haves" and "the have nots" robs everyone of security, happiness and peace.

So, what's to do about it? Confrontation or apathy: Oppose, resist and make a big stink, or deny, ignore and hope it goes away? Neither course guarantees satisfaction, and both do harm. Litigious thunder makes your own life miserable, usually for years, and costs bushels of time and money. The ostrich approach perpetuates the social flaw. Is there a middle ground to safeguard unalienable rights and maintain personal sanity?

When you believe you have been unjustly discriminated against, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) recommends education and negotiation to resolve disputes. This proactive approach starts with you.

Educate yourself. Know your rights under the law. Read Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, and the Equal Pay Act of 1963 (EPA) [all available at www.eeoc.gov/stats/index.html]. Understand the legal intent. Like most legislated documents, these are lengthy, repetitious and cumbersome. But taken one paragraph at a time they become more comprehensible.

With a firm grasp of the law, inspect your personal situation. Step back from emotional baggage and critically evaluate your case. So much of life - including job interviews and employment practices - is influenced by arbitrary and capricious butterfly wings of impulse, whim and chance. Fair or unfair, this is reality. And, innocent misnomers, no matter how consequential to your personal hopes and dreams, are not in the same class as willful and malicious intent.

During the interview/hiring process, for example, it is illegal to ask applicants anything about their age, religion or disabilities. If you were asked such questions and believe that your response (or polite refusal to respond) resulted in you not get-

ting the job, this would be cause to allege discrimination.

Absent of clear-cut markers, however, the line between legal discrimination and circumstantial happenstance may sometimes get a little hazy. Only a gut feeling tells you 'things ain't right.'

In any case, be proactive. Make an appointment to talk with a decision maker. This may be your immediate superior at work, the person who turned you down for a promotion, or the one who failed to hire you for a new job.

No matter how uncomfortable you feel about doing this, or how non-productive you believe the outcome may be, it is vital for you to take this action. If the cause of your dissatisfaction originates from simple miscommunication, you may be pleasantly surprised to find that your allegations are heard, understood and quickly resolved.

If the person you meet with is dismissive, patronizing or takes retribution against you, make an appointment with the next level of management.

In general, if you sincerely believe you have a substantive claim against an employer for unfair practices which discriminate against you while on the job or when applying for a job because of your race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age or disability, or if you are convinced that you have suffered retribution because you have opposed prejudicial discrimination in your work place, you may contact the EEO Office for procedures for filing Complaints of Discrimination based on Race, Color, Religion, Sex, Age, National Origin or Physical or Mental Handicap. The employee must contact the EEO Office within 45 calendar days of the alleged discriminatory action.



Army Ideas for Excellence Program FY98 suggestion highlights

During FY98, adoption of your ideas resulted in tangible savings to the District of \$481,892, along with numerous intangible benefits. Awards totaling over \$1,920 were paid to District employees for these ideas. Highlights of suggestions adopted with documented tangible savings include:

John Hickam of Cannon Power Plant, Mark Twain Lake Project Office, received a cash award of over \$1,700 for recommending a new design for removing wicket gate packing on Kaplan Unit No. 1. The two-piece packing gland can be removed without pulling any of the major parts of the unit. This prevents the need to enter into a contract to have the major turbine parts removed and reduces the amount of time the unit is inoperable. Implementation of his design results in a tangible benefit of \$418,500.

Jerald Schutte of Rend Lake Project Office was awarded \$50 for recommending that lake offices discontinue leasing weather radar equipment and obtain this information from the Internet. Mark Twain Lake decided to adopt his idea when their current lease expires in 1999. Discontinuance of this lease will reduce expenses at Mark Twain Lake by approximately \$400 per year.

In addition, five suggestions submitted during the Suggestion Campaign in May resulted in intangible savings. Linda Werner of Lake Shelbyville Project Office, Steele Beller of Real Estate Division, Dave Busse of Engineering Di-

vision, and Martha Plyler and Debby Trimble of Resource Management Office received awards ranging from \$25-\$50 to letters of appreciation and District logo letter openers. In addition, Linda Werner was the lucky recipient of the Suggestion Campaign 8-hour Time Off Award. Highlights of the suggestions adopted during the campaign include:

Forwarding receiving work packages from the field sites directly to the USACE Finance Center rather than being routed through the District Finance and Accounting Office; placing a sticker on each vehicle in the District fleet to show the location of the gas tank; formally recognizing employees who are nominated for, but do not win, a Federal Executive Board award by issuing a letter of appreciation from the District Commander; implementing a process to allow sharing of ex-

cess supplies with other offices; and changing the minimum amount of leave that can be charged to 30 minute increments.

During the year, 23 suggestions were received into the Suggestion Program, 15 of which were submitted during the Suggestion Campaign in May. This is up from a total of nine submitted during FY97, but we can do better during FY99!

Remember, your ideas are ALWAYS welcome. Simply complete DA Form 1045 stating the current situation or problem, your recommendation for improvement, and the benefits that will be derived, either tangible (\$\$) or intangible, and send it to CEMVS-RM, ATTN: Debby Trimble. The Suggestion Program is designed for you-why not give it a chance during FY99. If you have any questions about how to submit a suggestion, check out DR 5-2-17 or call Debby at 331-8072.

Kwanzaa: Harvest of success

In early Africa, harvest festivals began in late December and continued for seven or eight days with each day having a special significance.

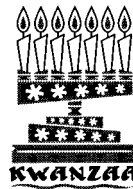
Kwanzaa is the African-American holiday which intertwines African traditions with American customs. It was first celebrated in 1966 in Los Angeles by Dr. Maulen Karenga and others. Its celebration has spread across the country and is celebrated by many people of African heritage.

Themes for various days of Kwanzaa are unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibil-

ity, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith.

The seven symbols associated with Kwanzaa are fruits, vegetables and nuts, the place mat, candle holder, ear of corn, gifts, the communal cup of unity and seven candles.

During Kwanzaa, we reverently retell the stories of contemporaries and ancestors, or how we "got over." And we know that whatever was sown in the preceding seasons of our lives has been reaped, and we accept these results. We determine the direction and make a new commitment for the year.





To your health

Stay well over the holidays: Tune up your immune system

The holiday season can be one of the happiest and busiest of the year. One thing you don't need in December is a cold or the flu. It's time to tune up your immune system. Here's how to do it:

1. Get serious about sleep.

Doctors at Pittsburgh University say poor sleep or lack of sleep is associated with lower immune system function. Go to bed at the regular time even if it means placing gifts in bags instead of wrapping them.

2. Don't skip recreation.

Spending time with friends can boost your defenses. A study by Carnegie Mellon University shows that people with a variety of social relationships had 20 percent greater immune function than those who did not.

3. Laugh. Hear and tell funny stories, watch funny videos and laugh out loud. Laughter decreases stress and activates immune cells.



4. Get going. Go to a basketball game, visit a museum, or attend a concert. Studies published in the British Medical Journal show that those who frequent cultural events live longer and are less likely to be sick than people who do not.

5. Write it down. Researchers at the University of Texas in Austin found that people who wrote about traumatic events for 20 minutes three times a week made half as

many visits to a doctor as those who did not.

6. Pray. Faith can make you healthier, say researchers at Duke University, who found that churchgoers were healthier.

7. Get a massage. It makes natural killer cells become more efficient and more numerous.

8. Take C. Studies link vitamin C with greater production of interferon, stronger T cells (your system's germ fighters), and increased killer cell activity.

9. Skip that second drink. More than one drink a day can suppress B cells that make antibodies and leave you more prone to infection.

10. Consider E. Vitamin E is especially important for aging immune systems, according to the USDA Human Nutrition Research Center at Tufts University.

Steroids and glaucoma

Asthma patients who regularly take inhaled steroids should see an ophthalmologist to have their eyes checked for glaucoma. Taking daily doses in excess of 1,500 micrograms of various inhaled steroids will increase the risk of glaucoma, say doctors at Johns Hopkins Medical Centers.

Diagnosing type 2

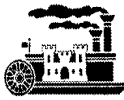
Lucky for them: People with type 2 diabetes are being diagnosed almost two decades earlier than patients of the previous generation, according to a new survey.

The American Diabetes Association urges people 45 and older to get tested for type 2 every three years. An estimated 16 million Americans have the disease, but almost 70 percent of them are under age 65.

Often not longer

When trying to establish a regular habit of exercise, focus on frequency, not duration. That is, instead of trying to walk or work-out for an hour three times a week, do shorter workouts of 15 or 20 minutes, but do them every day.

If you miss one session, your total time for the week doesn't suffer as much, doctors at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say. Once your exercise pattern is established, it's easy to work up to 30 minutes a day.



Retiree Review

by the Retiree Correspondent

The weather on the 19th of November was a little overcast with some sprinkles, but that didn't keep the retirees from gathering at the Salad Bowl to enjoy each other's company and also partake of some good food.

Charlie Denzel reported that one of our group recently passed away. Bill Hoff, who retired from the Recreational Planning area of the Planning Office, died on the 17th of November. He had been in St. Anthony's Hospital for about a week in mid-October and then went to a nursing home in Fenton. Bill and his "niece" will be missed. Our condolences to his family.

Charlie also mentioned that the District was having its Winter Ball on December 11th at the Science Center. He had information as to time, price and parking for anyone interested.

Elmer Huizenga and his wife Estelle made the journey from Cape-Jackson. (You know the weather had to be good if Elmer made it.) They left the St. Louis area to be with their daughter in the Cape-Jackson area, and wouldn't you know it, the daughter, with her husband and children, ups and moves to the Kansas City area. (You just can't

depend on these kids anymore.) Elmer and Estelle haven't made up their minds yet on what they are going to do. It's going to be a tough decision for the "Land Baron" to relocate.

Lew Scheuermann mentioned that his wife, Helen, was honored at the Concord Bowl for 28 years of dedicated service coordinating the youth bowling program. For her efforts she was awarded a trip for two to Cancun, Mexico, air fare included. The retirees are wondering who she will take with her. (Only kidding Lew.)

There were several story tellers. Elmer tried to tell a story but forgot the punch line. (Or maybe Estelle wouldn't allow it.) Charlie told what he said was his wife's pig joke. George Clapp was good for a great story as was Sandy Dombi. Bob Lutz, however, topped them all with his turkey story. Very appropriate for the season, Bob.

Mention was made of the retirees December luncheon. To date about 19 have indicated their intentions to attend. It will be like last year; there will not be a buffet in the room. Hope to see everyone then, December 17th at about 11 a.m. at the Salad Bowl. Bring a friend.

Missouri taxes on federal annuities

Editor's Note: This article came to us from the Kansas City District Public Affairs Office.

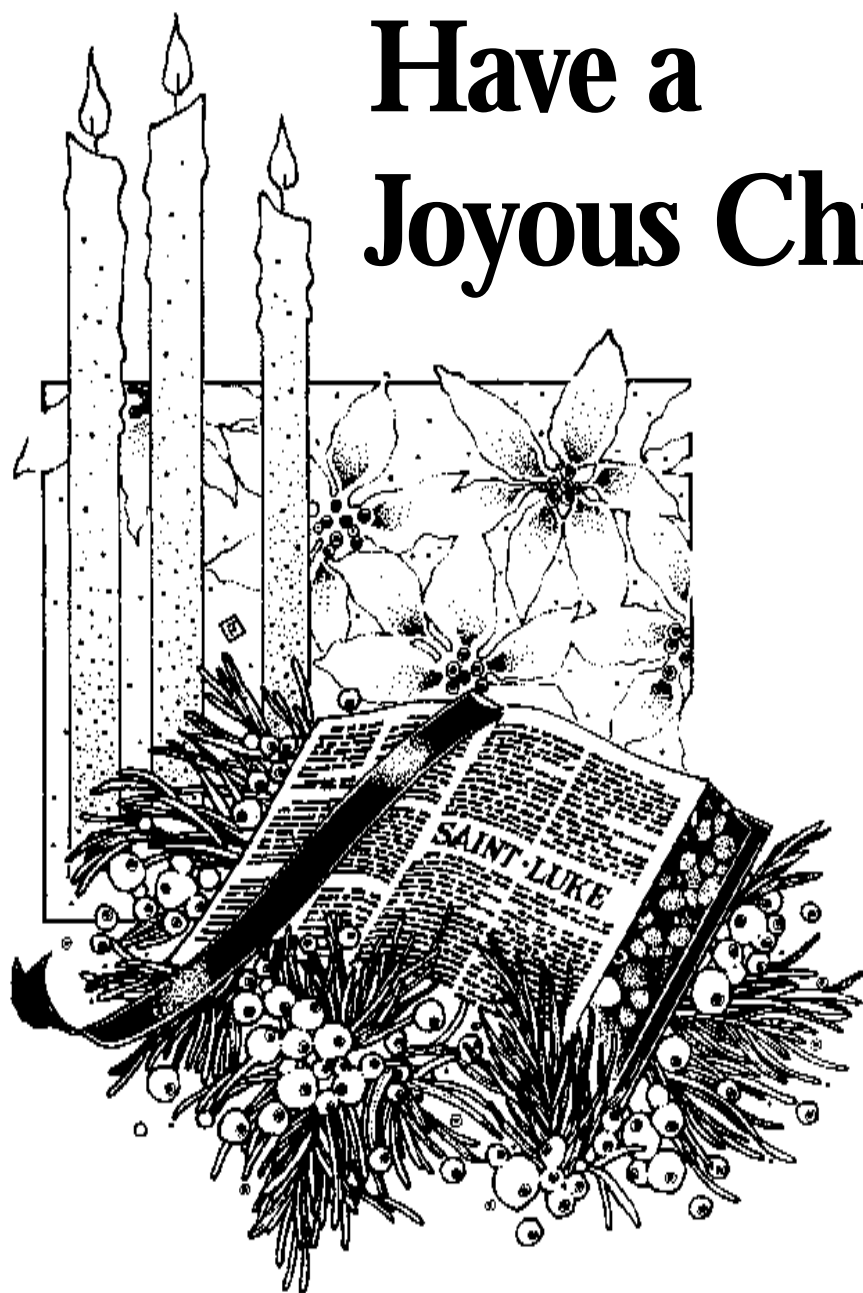
If you or anyone you know who is a federal or military retiree, or soon will be, who is living in Missouri, here is something you may be interested in. Many states allow total exemption of federal pensions from taxes. Missouri does not. Hoping to remedy this situation, Missouri State Representative Bill Boucher, who is chairman of the House Federal-State Relations and Veterans Affairs Committee, introduced HB 1947 during the last session of the Missouri General Assembly. His bill would provide for "the complete exemption of any annuities, pensions or retirement allowances annually provided by any law of the United States to the taxpayer." Unfortunately the bill did not advance because there was no grass roots support.

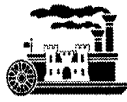
Mr. Boucher wrote to Kansas City District retiree Wayne Cook, who had asked about reintroducing the bill next session. Said Mr. Boucher: "We need a lot of support throughout the whole state. We need hundreds of letters written in support of

this bill, phone calls made, and many people to show up at the hearing rooms. In fact, we need to pack the hearing room to show the committee members there is a definite desire for passage of this bill. If we do not get that kind of support, it will be a waste of time. My decision to file the bill again will be determined by the amount of interest and support from people throughout Missouri." Mr. Boucher went on to say the hearing in the House committee would probably be early in the session, approximately late January or early February.

If you are interested in supporting this legislation to remove federal pensions from state taxation, write or call members of both Missouri State Houses to encourage their support, and send a copy of your letter to Mr. Boucher at Room 300B, State Capitol, 201 W. Capital Ave., Jefferson City, MO 65101. Since elections were just held, be sure you write to members who will take office in January. If you do not know the names of your representatives, contact your local library or the Missouri State Secretary of State's Office at PO Box 778, Jefferson City, MO 65102 or call that office at 573 751-4936.

**Have a
Joyous Christmas**





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